D&D
Art: Mooncolony (2023)
Battle of the Bands
HOMEBREW
A bardic minigame system for the World's Greatest Roleplaying Game

MINIGAME SYSTEM FOR 5E

Battle of the Bands

The Basics

The battle consists of 3 matches, where the bands compete through the power of their songs. A match's duration depends on the length of the songs being played. It can last for either 3 rounds (*Ditty*), 6 rounds (*Track*), or 9 rounds (*Epic*).

Each competing band gets 1 turn per round, with the order of turns being determined by the DM. At the start of each round, the DM must roll a d20 to determine the **Audience Conquer DC** for that round. On a band's turn, each of its members must roll a d6. The combined result becomes their **Presentation Score** for that round. Once the round concludes, the band with the Presentation score closest to the Audience Conquer DC gains 1 **Fervor Point.**

- ***Example:*** The DC for a round is 12. The first band gets a score of 8, while the second band gets a score of 17. Since 8 is closer to 12 than 17 is, the first band gains the fervor point.

If two or more bands get the same number for the winning Presentation Score, none of them gain a point on that round. Once all rounds are concluded, the band with the highest amount of fervor points becomes the winner of that match.

At the end of all three matches, the band with more wins becomes the audience's chosen; rising triumphant in the glory of Metal.

Musical Prowess

A character that has proficiency with a musical instrument can choose to play that instrument during their band's performance. If they do so, they may change their d6 to either a d4 or d8 (their choice) when rolling for their band's turn.

Alternatively, if a player character has access to a feature which allows them to grant a Bardic Inspiration die, they may choose to roll that die instead.

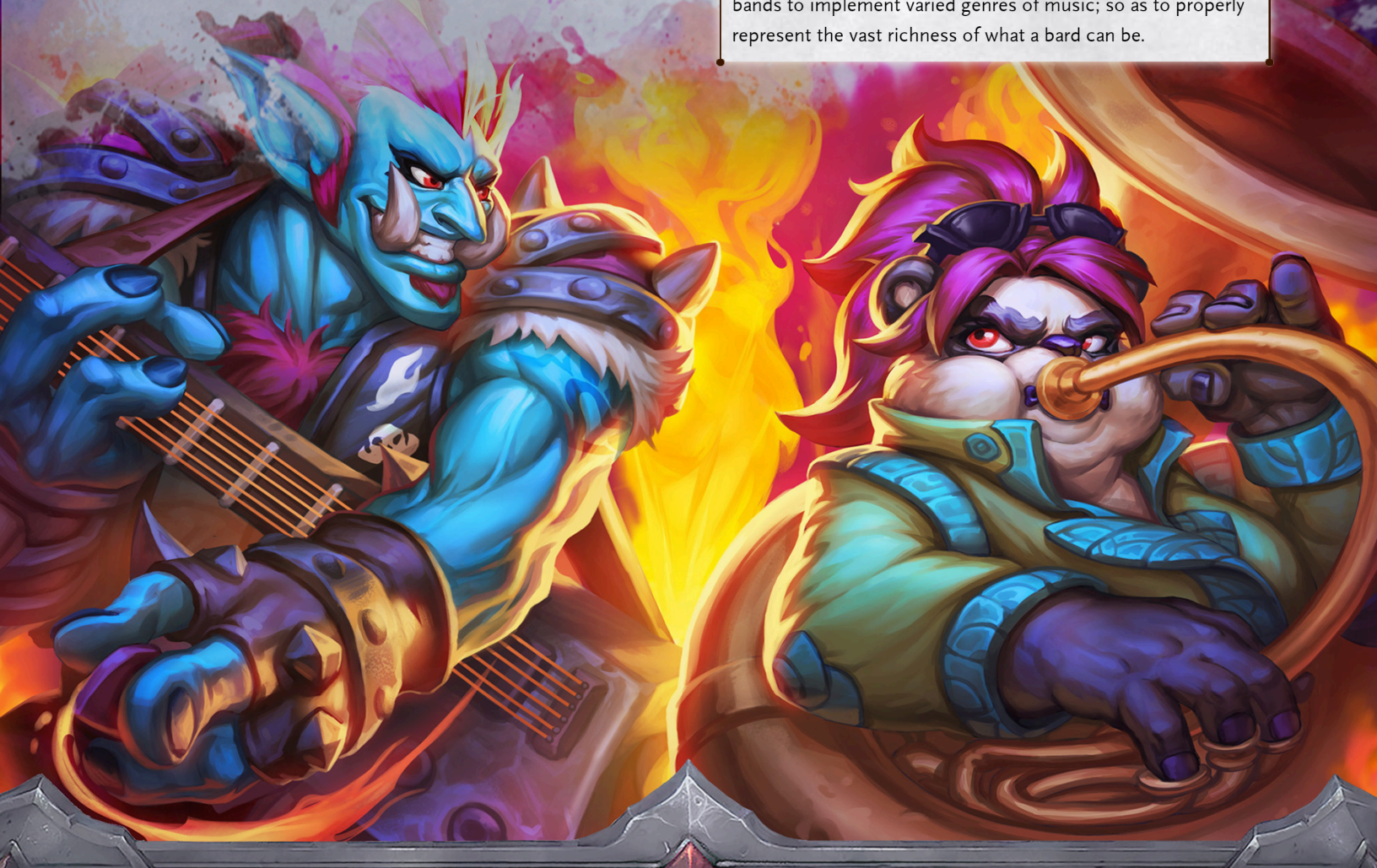
Solos and Whiffs

Once per match, each member of a band can take a special action during their band's turn, allowing them to potentially upheave the tide of battle.

The type of action available is determined by that band's current standing with the audience. If their band is currently in the lead, a character can perform a **Solo**. If an opposing band is in the lead, a character can make a **Whiff**. If all bands are currently tied, a character can freely choose between the two options.

Different Genres

While this system was conceptualized with Heavy Metal as the inspiration, it is encouraged for each of the battling bands to implement varied genres of music; so as to properly represent the vast richness of what a bard can be.



Performing a Solo

When a character chooses to perform a solo, they add their Performance bonus to their band's Presentation Score on that turn. If two or more characters choose to perform a solo in the same turn, the DM must roll a d6.

On a roll of 3-6, the characters are able to perform in harmony, adding their combined Performance bonus to the band's score. On a roll of 1-2, the characters stumble over each other, subtracting their combined bonus from the band's score instead.

Making a Whiff

When a character chooses to make a whiff, they subtract their Sleight of Hand bonus from their band's Presentation Score on that turn. If two or more characters choose to make a whiff in the same turn, the DM must roll a d6.

On a roll of 5-6, the characters pile their mistakes on top of each other, subtracting their combined Sleight of Hand bonus from the band's score. On a roll of 1-4, the characters somehow manage to end up winging it, adding their combined bonus to the band's score instead.

Sudden Death

If two or more competing bands are tied at the end of all three matches, one member from each band must make a final Charisma (Performance) check to determine which band ultimately prevails. In the highly improbable case that this results in a tie, every musician within 1000 feet must roll for initiative.

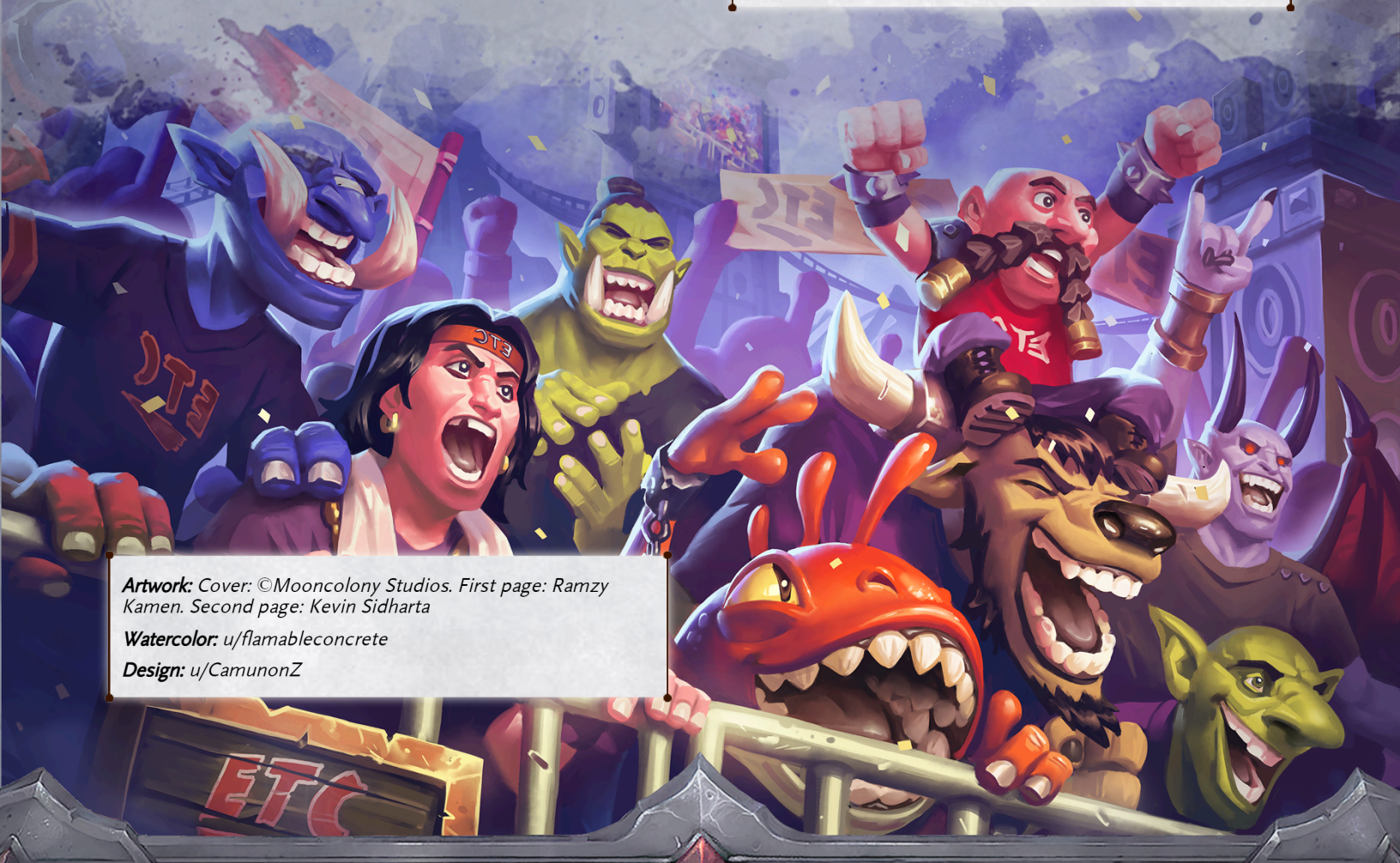
Pay your tributes to the Gods of Metal.

Appendix

- A band is considered to be in the lead when currently holding the highest amount of fervor points in that match.
- A character's **Sleight of Hand** bonus is what would be applied to their roll when making a Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check: Dexterity modifier + proficiency bonus (if they are proficient with the skill).
- A character's **Performance** bonus is what would be applied to their roll when making a Charisma (Performance) check: Charisma modifier + proficiency bonus (if they are proficient with the skill, or with a musical instrument being played as part of the check).

No Need for D&D?

If you find yourself wanting to play a game of this without the need to have a whole session prepped up, you may choose to ignore all rule sections aside from *"The Basics"*; essentially treating this as a standalone party game. Alternatively, you may choose to determine arbitrary values for each player's Performance and Sleight of Hand bonuses (having the players roll for them on the spot can also prove to be fun); thus allowing you to make use of the *Solo* and *Whiff* mechanics on your game.



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